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ABSTRACT

The paper examines interpretations of educational development in western Europe since the 1960s and suggests that equality of opportunity has been the most pervasive theme underlying educational policy and development. Most often used to describe educational development are (1) demographic and economic data, (2) analyses of structural changes in the educational system, and (3) evaluation of the changing role of education vis-a-vis the social system generally. None of the descriptions has the historical perspective to convey the extent or the true nature of educational change which has resulted from the substitution of public education for the church as the principal transmitter of values and beliefs. A better measure of educational development is the value change reflected in public policy. A major result of the policy shift toward public education rather than religious education has been an increase in equality of opportunity. Three interpretations of equality of opportunity presently prevail in European nations: (1) predestinative (division of secondary schools into vocational and college preparatory); (2) redemptive (equal life chances for all students, regardless of academic ability); and (3) dissenting (alternative schools, lifelong education, and individual curriculum). The conclusion is that educational development must be understood as a combination of past and present values and that educational systems must cease to be, or to be considered, purveyors of a particular orthodoxy. (Author/DB)

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EQUALITY, IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY : AN ESSAY IN THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

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EQUALITY, IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY:

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Introduction

In the 1960's, education as a field of policy studies, came of age. Not only was it widely held to be a vehicle for sustaining economic growth. It was also regarded as a basic catalyst in planned social change. In quantitative terms, the evidence to support these views was clear for all to see. In most Western European countries enrollments in post 16 education more than doubled, a phenomenon closely followed by similar explosions in the number of students entering higher education. Alongside this development went others, involving in the main, changes in the structures of education systems. Such transformations, both at secondary and at higher education level emerged in response to demographic and political pressures on the one hand and the manpower needs of the national economy on the other. Qualitative change in secondary education involved the gradual extension of the comprehensive principle in Sweden, Norway, France, the United Kingdom and, to a lesser extent, Germany. In higher education, this took the form of new types of institute, differing from the traditional university either with respect to its entry conditions or in relation to the type of studies undertaken: polytechnics and the Open University in England, the Instituts Universitaires de Technologie in France, the first faltering steps towards a "comprehensive university" in the Federal Republic of Germany, to mention but a few.

If the structures of education systems changed significantly, no less significant were changes inside the area of educational studies. The more education came to be acknowledged as an instrument for long and medium term development so other academic disciplines, previously peripheral to it - though closely associated with policy formulation - entered its purlieu. One thinks, for example, of political economy, economics and administrative studies. This was a considerable departure from the fundamental purpose of an area hitherto seen mainly in terms of teacher training.

An examination of the academic disciplines that penetrated into educational studies over the three decades since the war shows clearly the gradual union of education with planning techniques. Up to the early 1950's the dominant fields in the study of education were demography, psychology and social statistics. They corresponded very closely to what were the major preoccupations of the day. These were the identification of ability and its allocation to what were thought to be the types of education most suited to the individual's intelligence - academic, technical or vocational (1). In the following decade two other fields were added - sociology and economics. They reflected the growing concern with problems of social inequality on the one hand and the need to develop particular strategies by which investment in education might yield a maximum return, both for the individual and for the community at large. The past five years have witnessed a further influx of "disciplines" in particular administration, management and government studies - fields concerned with decision-making on the one hand and the allocation or handling of resources - financial, equipment or human - on the other (2). How far this development was hastened if at all by the onset of the economic crisis is difficult to say. Nevertheless, all these areas of study have, in one form or another, a common feature - that of the husbanding of resources. Education can no longer look forward to the manna and quails of yesteryear.

Thus the discipline of education has undergone almost as drastic a change in content as the system which it studies has undergone in form. Change in the education system has been variously described, depending on the type of fundamental "disciplinary tool" used. These can fall into three major categories. The first, mainly statistical, relies variously on demography, economics or social statistics. The second, influenced by planning and curriculum studies examines the structural changes in the education system, for example, alterations in terms and conditions of access to secondary or to post-secondary education, or the way pupils are grouped for learning. The third, drawing heavily upon sociology, delves into the changing role of the education system vis-à-vis the social system generally, as well as alterations in value and ethos accompanying it. There are equally other approaches combining these three in different ways. Perhaps the best example of such eclecticism is the concept of the three stages in the development of

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(1) Monique de Saint Martin, British Journal of Sociology and Sociologie de l'Education.

(2) See for instance Edward Boyle and Anthony Crosland. Politics of Education, ed. Maurice Kogan, London, Penguin, 1971.

education systems passing, from the elite, to the mass to the universal access stage (1).

It would be exceedingly unwise to deny the usefulness of any of these. Without statistical indicators, the effect of policy decisions cannot be monitored and thus the ancillary fields that depend on them - the economics, administration and management of education - would be merely esoteric exercises. This is not to say that the statistical approach to educational development is the only one, though undoubtely it is the most important. Nor is this to deny the usefulness of constructing statistical tools. Indeed, they play a decisive part in the social sciences. Others, for instance, have examined the implications of quantitative change in relation to shifts in ideology that emerge as education systems move on from the elite stage of their evolution (2).

What we want to suggest is this : these approaches are profoundly ahistorical. The steady tramp of yearly ranks of statistics, marching from official publications, from the bastions of governments and international organisations, feed a false impression. For better or for worse, intentionally or not, this impression is one of inevitability. Like growth economics which it was intented to support, education to be successful, ought to expand both in resources consumed and amounts of justice purveyed, in the form of more children remaining in school or reaching higher education. The phenomenon is, in itself, of prime interest. It would seem that human progress which the 19th century Western polity identified with technological achievment and mastery of man over the forces of nature has, in the 20th century polity, moved from mechanism to man. Today's education industry appears to share the same feelings about its achievement as the Victorian poet, Martin Tupper, did about the Great Exhibition of 1851 :

> "How swiftly Providence advances thus
> Our flag of progress placing in the van !
> This double decade of the world's short span
> Is richer than two centuries of man." (3).

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(1) Martin Trow, "Problems in the Transition from Elite to Mass Higher Education" in Policies for Higher Education, Paris, OECD, 1974, pp. 51-101.

(2) Earl Hopper, Readings in the theory of the Development of Education Systems, London, Hutchinson, 1971.

(3) verses on the Great Exhibition of 1851 quoted by Asa Briggs in : Victorian People ; a reassessment of persons and themes. London, Penguin, 1970.

Yet, without the historical perspective to correct it neither the sociological nor the statistical approach is adequate in conveying the extent of change. Or, which is worse, they create a sense of false novelty. Development in education is presented as a seamless web of continuity, a towering progress of needs successfully met and priorities successfully implemented. Just as important, however, are the discontinuities that lie beneath this unruffled surface.

Purpose of the paper

The purpose of this paper is to show that the interpretation of educational development in terms of "novelty" combined with a strange continuity is inadequate, where not superficial. It remains nevertheless true that a change in education usually reflects change in the values of society as a whole. And this in turn emerges in the type of political decision taken and the type of organisation to emerge at school or post school level. Therefore, changes in values reflected in the process of public policy are far more accurate a manner of examining stages in educational evolution.

We shall look at these discontinuities in terms of one particular issue that has had abiding interest throughout the past 20 years in Western countries - Equality. There are a number of interpretations implicit in the concept of Equality of Educational Opportunity. Each interpretation corresponds to a clear stage in development and each stage represents a considerable discontinuity vis-à-vis the beliefs previously held on this matter. Not only is the mode of discourse different - reflecting different priorities and terms of reference governing the discussion. Each stage also presages different strategies for educational development and thus different roles for the education system itself, not to mention other ways of relating education to the remainder of the social system. This is not simply a sociological phenomenon. It has administrative consequences as well. For, if different strategies of development presume different relationships between education and the social system, so also they assume a different relationship between the ministries and government departments involved in their implementation and administration.

Historically speaking, one of the most significant social changes in the West has involved the substitution of the education system for the Church as the principal agency for the transmission of values and beliefs. This does not

preclude the Church continuing to act in a similar capacity through its own education system, or, alternatively, through those education systems which explicitly include religious instruction in the curriculum.

There are, obviously still countries where the Church continues to have considerable hold over the education system, though the pattern over the past 100 years has been one of increasing conflict between church and secular state for control over the administration of schools, higher education and, more recently, over the health service. It is then, scarcely surprising to find that much of today's debate over the conflicting interpretations of equality of educational opportunity rests upon convictions that are highly theological and in which the undercurrent of metaphysics still runs strongly.

What we want to suggest in this paper is that the past two decades have been of far more significance, historically, than is generally supposed. The changes in the basic concepts underpinning notions and interpretations of equality of opportunity find little parallel except in the history of the Reformation period in Europe. Indeed, we would suggest that, stripped of their psychological and statistical jargon, the issues debated over the past twenty years mirror very closely the disputations which, couched in a different discourse and involving such matters as salvation and grace, preoccupied the major Western religions of the 16th and 17th centuries. What we are witnessing amounts to nothing less than the secularisation of beliefs which, though carried over into a secular society were still, basically, religious. Just how far current interpretations of equality of opportunity draw upon religious concepts is evident when one examines the notions of intelligence, education and its development.

The use of historical analogies as explicative devices for modern phenomena is an entertaining though often risky undertaking. By using a religious analogue to clarify and to set in perspective some contemporary developments in education we have, perforce, also to admit that the "tool" itself - in the case of the religious precepts of the 16th century - is part of the phenomenon. This is certainly a complicating factor. But it in no way undermines our thesis.

For sake of convenience we will limit ourselves to secondary education, where this conflict has been particularly acrimonious, the consequences relatively clear-cut, and the discontinuities patent.

There are three stages in the development of education systems at secondary level. Though these may be plotted statistically, it is far more important to attend to the change in premises about human development, that accompanies the shift from one pattern or stage of evolution in education systems to another. If we associate ideological change with structural innovation in education systems we find that the notion of equality itself alters radically. We will examine two major interpretations of equality of educational opportunity : the "predestinative" and the "redemptive". They are not the only concepts, however. There are others which, in varying degrees grow out of the latter and, very often, appear to challenge it. At first sight it would seem that the main difference lies less in the realm of values and idelolgy than in minor questions of "strategy" or of how a particular interpretation of equality can be realised through educational means and measures. The first of these involves the concept of permanent or recurrent education, the second turns about the movement launched by Ivan Illich - the Deschoolers. Placed within the model of religious development outlined by Joachim Wach, they represent a "Dissenting" interpretation and a sectarian disagreement with the "redemptive interpretation" of educational opportunity. Both are nevertheless important departures from the two predominant views. Accordingly, we will devote some effort to examining in what way they differ both as regards their "theology" and the type of education "system" they envisage.

The predestinative interpretation of equality of opportunity

Of the two interpretations mentioned, the predestinative is certainly the oldest historically speaking. Only very recently has its secularised form, which justified the division of secondary schools into various "types" - Gymnasium, Lycée or Hauptschule, Secondary Modern or Collège d'Enseignement général - been replaced by the redemptive interpretation. The salient feature of the predestinative interpretation of equality of educational opportunity is, as Max Weber noted of its religious analogue, its utter certainty, its limited aristocracity of the "Elect". "Predestination", he wrote, "provides the individual who has found religious grace with the highest possible degree of certainty of salvation once he has attained assurance that he belongs to the very limited aristocracy of salvation who are the Elect... but the individual must find certain key indices ... (to) determine whether he possesses this incomparable charisma... (this) is provided by one's knowledge that one's behaviour is acceptable to God...

in short (it) is based on a central and constant quality of personality" (1).

There are many forms of predestination, each having specific doctrinal and organisational consequences. The most extreme form is the Calvinist. God's grace, the prior condition to salvation, is assigned in a mysterious and totally arbitrary manner beyond human comprehension, though that does not mean to say that its allocation is not part of a divine plan but simply that human understanding is not sufficient to penetrate it. Salvation in the Calvinist creed is given to some without any merit on their part, purely out of God's free-will and choice. The divine will is the supreme standard (2). Thus no creature has the right to complain at being part of the damned, just as it has no right to rejoice at being part of the elect, for it is not in its power to determine in which category it shall fall.

The essence of Calvin's doctrine of predestination is that it denied free-will to God's creatures, but made that same characteristic symbolic of the majesty of God. As the German historian Troeltsch wrote, "... God did not create the world out of a sense of need for the responsive love of His creatures : His world plan has not been disturbed by the free-will of the creature and salvation does not consist in the restoration of universal beatitude to all creatures through the miracle of redemption. Rather it is the inscrutable will of God which is the basis of the world and the cause of its whole course." (3).

What then, does the theology of predestination share with the predestinative concept of equality of educational opportunity ? Both the doctrine and its educational equivalent rest upon a common and shared feature. They allocate the individual to his station on the basis of a single criterion that is felt to be randomly distributed either amongst the Church or the population. In the case of the Calvinist order this criterion is God's grace upon the individual and in the case of the education system the possession of some general factor of intelligence. Both grace and the notion of intelligence in the predestinative interpretation which is also coterminous often with the psychological definition

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(1) Max Weber, Sociology of Religion, London, Tavistock, 1966, p. 203.

(2) Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, New York, Harper and Row, 1969, (vol. II, p. 582).

(3) Ibid.

of this quality are often held to be fixed, immutable. For without these two conditions, there can be no predictability. However, since few possess the outward signs of this inner spiritual or mental quality, whether manifested by soberness or success in IQ testing, both are exclusivist. The majority of mankind are sinners. The majority of the school population do not possess that general ability that permits access to theoretical and academic education.

In view of this shared characteristic fundamental to both the theology and the ideology of the "predestinative" interpretation, we can now examine the ways in which it is legitimised. Legitimation requires a particular strongly held series of beliefs, as strongly held by the Elect as by the majority of those "damned" to Hellfire or to the non "academic" school. This depends on three axioms or - to remain in the religious context - three articles of faith. These are:

1. that intelligence is innate and hereditary, but that like the state of grace itself, it is unequally distributed amongst individuals;
2. that the possession of intelligence/grace is accompanied by certain external manifestations which, in the case of the former, may be objectively measured by psychometrical testing;
3. that the external signs of inner grace/intelligence are, in Weber's terms, based upon a central and *constant* (our italics) quality of personality. This is very similar to what early psychologists, for example Burt and Cattel, termed the "G Factor", a single criterion which, though multi-dimensional in its components, nevertheless was held to account for variations in "intelligence". Much of the work of the early psychometricians was, accordingly, to seek out the underlying correlates of this central and constant quality. Ultimately, its supposed constancy became an article of faith. The presence or absence of this quality as manifested through performance in mathematical and verbal reasoning tests, taken at puberty or slightly before, became the basis of predictive allocation to one type of education rather than another. The justification for this lay in the belief that the intelligence of the adult was thought predictable on the basis of the performance of the child.

These axioms have important consequences for the concepts of both equality and justice. In the "predestinative" interpretation of educational opportunity, justice and equality are separate. They are prescriptive and differentiated as well, rather than all-embracing. Justice consists in the right of all deemed "able"

or "saved" to enjoy a greater share of the resources allocated to education by society. Equality, on the other hand, resides in the fact that the "able" are drawn from all social classes, irrespective of origins, fortune or family (1). And, by the same token, it is equally "just" that those not possessed of the requisite single quality resign themselves to their lot. Indeed, there can be no concept of "social justice" in the sense of equal access of disadvantaged groups to all levels of the education system, just as there can be no "justice" if sinners are allowed admission to the Elect. The first would nullify the "rights" of the able and the second would set at nought the majesty of God which resides in his total free-will.

Most societies based on a concept of "the Elect" tend to be hierarchical in their organisation and authoritarian in their ethos. This is particularly the case in the Calvinist doctrine. By extention it is also the case in those societies underwriting a "predictive" interpretation of educational opportunity. For effectively the school is regarded as the microcosm of the present social order. Thus, the internal organisation of the school comes very close to resembling a "consistory" where "the leaders of the congregation (teachers) maintained the moral law, encouraged each other, established corporative judgement upon sin, stabilised orthodoxy and repressed misconduct." (2). Fundamentally, both to society and to its microcosm the school is the pessimistic belief in human nature, that the majority of mankind is tainted by original sin and only weaned from this state by external and continual constraints. The paedagogic organisation of the school is therefore aimed at inculcating normative behaviour through a system of streams, filters and tracks. Such devices serve two fundamental purposes: they are a series of obstacles, testing the innate persistance and endurance of the individual as a means of confirming those secondary characteristics or dimensions contained in the overall concept of "intelligence". They are also constraints to verify the original prediction of "innate ability". They are , in addition, eliminative, seeking out the true signs of "intelligence" or, if one turns to the religious domain, identifying the true signs that accompany the state of grace and salvation.

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(1) See in the English context E.J.T. Brennan, Education for National Efficiency: the contribution of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, London, 1975, The Athlone Press, p. 31 It must nevertheless be pointed out that the view of intelligence being held as equally distributed throughout the population was rather rare.

(2) Owen Chadwick, The Reformation, London 1964, Penguin, p.177.

Such a system of paedagogic structures itself reposes upon two immutable assumptions, the first involving the relationship between pupil and the curriculum; the second, individual motivation. We have seen that the predictive interpretation of educational opportunity takes as given the innate nature of intelligence. Equally, however, it takes as given that the ways by which this quality is fostered and nurtured are themselves unchanging. In fine, the key concept is one of adaptation by the pupil to the curriculum (1) and the possession of a high degree of motivation to adjust to the obstacles placed in front of him. Conversely, it is also taken as necessary that such structures as streaming by ability, despite their suggested inaccuracy, exist as the proven way of detecting such human characteristics. What is a constraint for the majority is the stepping stone for the minority, i.e. to demonstrate motivation, or what David Reisman has called an "internal gyroscope" (2), a most interesting notion, the equivalent - in secular and psychological terms - of that "inner light" born of conviction, persistance, endurance, that marks out the Elect .

If, today, the "predestinative" interpretation of educational opportunity rests upon the twin principles of allocation and confirmation, it equally reposes on the conviction that resources, human, in the form of talent or material in the form of finance, are limited (3). Moreover, it espouses a static concept of society. It cannot admit the notion of education as a tool for social development, unless that social development depends entirely on the elite, which is often argued. Nor can it admit to being a development model for other than the elite or the Elect. For to do so would be to suggest that intelligence is not innate. And in this case a crucial constant in the equation of predictability disappears.

The concept of autonomy in the predestinative interpretation of educational opportunity

Yet, intertwined amongst the practices for winnowing out the Elect and confirming

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(1) Frances Stevens, The Living Tradition : social and educational assumptions of the Grammar School, London, Hutchinson, 1970.

(2) D. Reisman et al., The Lonely Crowd, study of the Changing American character, Yale University Press, 1969.

(3) T. Husén, Talent, Equality, Meritocracy, The Hague, 1975, Martinus Nijhoff.

them in the rightsousness of their ways, is a particular ethic, permeating both the organisation (in this case the education system) and its ideal-type members. This ethic is a dual one in that it is embodied both in the comportment of the individual vis-à-vis society and in the relationship between the education system and the state. It is, then, Janus-headed, governing social relationsnips on a personal level and political relationships on the level of organisations. It is the concept of autonomy.

The sociologists of religion have described the concept in various terms, some approving, others disapproving, but most of them are agreed upon the strong ties it has with the notion of predestination. Autonomy can, of course, mean many things. It can,for instance, be associated with the notion of "free-will". In the Calvinist context, however, free-will is almost the equivalent to a misunderstanding of God's purpose, which being omnipotent, cannot be limited by anything so mundane as the free-will of his individual creatures. It is, then merely a sign that the individual has failed to penetrate the mysterious designs of the Deity. In this case, however, I take it to signify "self-sufficiency" or that type of behaviour which Weber associated with "inner worldly asceticism" (1). The development of this trait amongst Calvinists sprang,according to Troeltsch "from the need for self examination and... for systematic concentration on his own independent achievement" (2) as a means of ascertaining the individual's membership of the Elect. The degree of autonomy possessed by the individual is thus coterminous with the number of obstacles he successfully overcomes. We have outlined some of them in the education system in the previous section. But this same process also involves achievement and performance which are the external manifestations of his inner light. Thus, the stereo-type of the successful pupil in systems based on the "predictive" interpretation of educational opportunity is almost Bunyanesque in his behaviour:

> "They who so set him round
> With dismal stories
> Do but themselves confound
> His strength the more is." (3).

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(1) Max Weber, op. cit. p. 207.

(2) Troeltsch, op. cit. p. 590.

(3) John Bunyan "He who would valiant be", Hymns Ancient and Modern.

Autonomous, the individual is also responsible for his failure, at which point the concept of autonomy also underlies the criteria which the "predictive" interpretation regards as just and valid for assessing the performance of education systems. These are the levels of attainment reached by pupils reaching the end of maximum schooling - at 18 in the case of secondary schools. The predictive interpretation, therefore, judges an education system in the light of its end-products. Not, however, in the light of the numbers who "fall by the wayside and on stony ground" (1).

The other area in which autonomy plays an equally crucial part is to be found in the type of relationship between an education system and the state upheld by the subscribers of this interpretation of educational opportunity. Historically, the notion of separation between many Protestant churches and the state can be explained by the desire of the former to avoid the compromising religious virtue that might be involved were the latter not kept at arms length (2). Such a doctrine, based on the notion of a minimum of state control, passed into economic theory during the 19th century, to emerge in the form of "laissez faire"(3). It has educational ramifications as well, especially in the United Kingdom.

If the justification of minimal or non-intervention between state and church could be sustained on grounds of religious conviction in the 16th and 17th centuries, the grounds have shifted since. The predestinative interpretation justifies this relationship in education on the grounds that otherwise it would falsify the detection of ability. Ability, within the framework of the predictive approach, is neutral. And in its neutrality, uninfluenced by either environmental or sociological factors, resides its justice. And this, in turn, is administered through the principle of selection - open to all at a particular moment in time - usually around age 11.

Because the principle of selection lies at the heart of the predestinative interpretation and because also it holds intelligence to be unevenly distributed across social classes, the state, it is felt, should be kept at a distance lest it be tempted for sectional reasons to intervene and to falsify the natural

(1) T. Husén, op. cit., pp. 115-6.

(2) Weber, op. cit., p. 227.

(3) Weber, ibid.

working of this mechanism. Thus, the relationship between state and education system rests upon a concept of selection, itself erected into a "natural law". Indeed, there is even a school of thought in England which argues that the Parliamentary Act of 1944, which created a tripartite secondary education system based on psychometric testing, was itself an infringement of this principle (1). The just working of the natural law of selection therefore demands relative autonomy - or at the very least - a high degree of self-responsibility of the education system vis-à-vis the state.

However desirable the autonomous relationship between state and the education system might be in theory, it rarely takes this form in reality. The necessities of finance and equipment exclude it. Rather, what is involved is a historical maintenance relationship. Historical, because the creation of such a system was the outcome of a political decision in the past, when the curriculum was defined, together with the conditions necessary to enter one type of school as opposed to another. A maintenance relationship, because the role of the state should be to provide finance and equipment, buildings and trained personnel sufficient to keep the system functioning in accordance with the ideology thus created, and the overall purpose of seeking out the Elect.

The dimension of social policy in the predestinative interpretation

This brings us to the question "What are the implications of the predestinative interpretation of educational opportunity for educational development and in particular for social policy?" There are several points to be made here. The first is that, once developed, only with great difficulty can an education system based on this premiss today become an instrument for social policy on any but its own terms. The second is its extreme administrative fragility, fragile because resting on a concept of a static society, static in demography, static also in the number of children deemed intelligent enough to warrant extended secondary education. Limited also in the resources it is prepared to invest in education as well as limited in the power of intervention accorded to the

(1) Bryan Wilson, Equality and Education, London, 1975, Faber and Faber.

state. Without demographic stability, the principle of selection assumes the role of a variable and increasingly appears as an arbitrary act rather than as the working of a natural law. Too many children, and selection becomes more rigorous. Indeed, if one applies strict logic to the predestinative interpretation, it leads to the present generation automatically becoming disadvantaged vis-à-vis its predecessors. For, if the number of those selected remains constant, in times of demographic pressure and expansion, it is likely those numbers as a proportion of the age group, could well diminish. The strict application of its own internal logic to the predestinative interpretation leads therefore to excessively strange contradictions. If the state responds by greater investment in buildings and resources to keep pace with demographic growth, the proportion of the age group selected may be held constant. But should the birth rate decline, then to fill the empty places in the halls of the elect demands a lessening in the degree of selectivity. And this, in turn, denies the immutable nature of selectivity itself.

Yet, as we have pointed out, selection in the predestinative interpretation of educational opportunity is both an administrative procedure and a key element in this particular ideology. If one attacks it on administrative grounds - that is to say, its arbitrariness - one also attacks its doctrinal basis - that is to say, the concept of intelligence being unevenly distributed as well as innate. Hence, what starts out by being a protest against the organisation and administration of an education system grounded in the predestinative ideology, is apt, very swiftly, to assume the dimensions of a critique against the principle itself (1).

The redemptive interpretation of educational opportunity

Only during the past two decades or so has the predestinative ideology of educational opportunity given way to what might be called the "redemptive" interpretation. It may be argued, of course, that this is so only insofar as educational policy is concerned. By contrast, both educational and sociological

(1) For the religious mechanism of protest see Joachim Wach, The Sociology of Religion, Chicago, 10th edition, 1962, University of Chicago Press, p. 166.

thinking have long since espoused the redemptive view. This is true. But we are concerned here with those changes in thinking which emerged in the form of policy. However consoling it might be to the sociologist to know his was a position of dissent, it remains nonetheless a fact that the life chances of innumerable adolescents and young people were affected - for the better - only when educational policy makers foreswore the hitherto dominant orthodoxy of the predestinative view.

According to this interpretation salvation is not an arbitrary gift showered on particular individuals, and still less are they able to influence it. Rather its achievement depends upon institutional means. "Salvation", to quote Weber, "supervenes by virtue of the grace which is distributed on a continual basis by some communal organisation that has either divine or prophetic credentials for its establishment." (1) The redemptive interpretation relies on what Weber has termed "institutional grace" that is, the distribution of this quality residing within the charge of the organised church, as an intermediary between man and his maker, rather than being a matter of divine free-will manifested directly and without priestly intermediary between God and his creature. The redemptive approach, which finds its most corporate expression in the Catholic Church, admits that human beings may find salvation, but on condition they obey sufficiently God's commandments, that they may be in a state to receive the distribution of grace through the Church. This, of itself, assures salvation. In his quest for salvation, man is not irremediably divided into two distinct groups of the damned and the saved. Salvation depends on the individual's acts and actions, upon repentance, contrition and restitution. As a doctrine, it neither denies original sin nor does it close the door to perfectibility. It observes simply that human beings whilst having their own ethical standards and behaviour patterns, do not cling to them either rigorously or consistently. Their behaviour, whatever the individual's underlying ethic, will alter depending on the force of circumstances (2). The redemptive interpretation, whether religious or educational, emphasises its concern with the mass as well as the elect, with "sinners" as well as the "saved" for who can tell whether tomorrow's action may not bring the blameless to sin?

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(1) Weber, The Sociology of Religion, op. cit., p. 167.

(2) Ibid, p. 155.

There are a number of common features that colour the redemptive interpretation both in religion and in the education system. The first of these is the "cure" of "souls". The cure of souls springs from a series of common suppositions, that salvation and "intelligence" are determined by circumstances, that through organisation and involvement with the community salvation or attainment may be influenced beneficially. The close links between both the religious and pedagogic domains are clear when, for instance, one considers the importance attached by the former to organised preaching and spiritual [illegible] and by the latter to orientation and remedial work, a feature that has become a common development throughout the West in recent times. In contrast to an education system erected around the predestinative interpretation in which the school stands apart from the community - amidst it, yet not in it - the school in that system subscribing to the redemptive ethos seeks to become part of its community. The role of both Church and school is accordingly an active one, the continual saving of souls and returning them to the appropriate paths of Grace as often as may be necessary.

Unlike the predestinative interpretation of educational opportunity, the redemptive interpretation does not rely on a single, arbitrary criterion determined at a supposedly single moment of time in ascertaining the ability of the individual. Judgement and assessment tend to be carried out over time, often through continual evaluation - though this does not follow of necessity. Thus we find growing up a system of "life accounting", to use the religious expression: effectively a balancing out of good actions against the bad (1).
In the religious context, this is justified by the conviction that man, whilst fallible is also redeemable. The same philosophical assumption lies behind some of the most marked structural changes in secondary schools over the past twenty years. Notions of retraining, catching up, of the "open sixth form" in English comprehensive schools and the various proposals for open colleges or "Open Universities", all flow from this particular principle. A comprehensive education system, whether at secondary or at post-secondary level, like a comprehensive Church offers "salvation" to all - or almost all - of those who enter its doors. Against the exclusivist, allocative role associated with the "predestinative" interpretation, it espouses an inclusivist role: Extra Ecclesia, nulla salus.

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(1) Weber, op. cit., p. 155.

Characteristic of the ideology intertwined in education systems founded on this premise are the following features.

1. That intelligence is influenced by private environment particularly that of primary groups and, by home, family and parental expectations.
2. That intelligence can be measured, but that it is subject to change within the individual depending on his personal circumstances.
3. That, consequently, an individual's potential can be ascertained but only over a long period of time.

Whether or not intelligence is partly a hereditary factor it is also affected by environmental influences (1). Indeed, far from being fixed, it is under certain circumstances capable of generation. Taken in conjuction with the inclusivist role assigned to the education system, this has profound effects upon both the structure of education systems and upon school organisation. Since it is inaccurate to pronounce upon the rate at which the individual's aptitudes develop, it is equally injudicious to assign him to a particular school type or to a particular type of education. Hence the structural form which fits in well with this doctrine is the creation of a single type of school for a specific age range: for instance, the various types of comprehensive schools in England, Wales and Scotland, the Collège d'Enseignement Secondaire for 11 to 16 year olds in France, the various patterns of the experimental Gesamthochschule in Germany, the Basic school for 7 to 16 year olds and the Gymnasieskola for 16 to 18 year olds in Sweden (2). Within the curricular domain, a particular characteristic of this interpretation of educational opportunity is to be seen in the gradual emergence of common core syllabusses, with a certain measure of compensatory teaching for the disadvantaged.

The redemptive interpretation is not, primarily, individualistic. With its emphasis on organisation, its goals are usually expressed in terms of social development, of cooperation, rather than upon determining the elect - or, to use the sociological equivalent, to assigning social mobility. Its ethic is,

(1) A.H. Halsey, Equality of Opportunity, OECD, Paris, 1961.

(2) Brian Simon and Caroline Benn, Half Way There, Harmondsworth, 1973, Penguin.

then cooperative. Such changes in the organisation and structure both of education systems as well as individual schools reflect equally fundamental changes in the way in which the individual himself is regarded. The apparent paradox between concern for social development on the one hand and concern for the individual on the other deserves further explanation. The ideology of the individual is often equated with 19th century liberalism and this in turn is apt to be regarded as the antithesis if not the counter-concept to that of equality. The redemptive interpretation, as we have seen, rested upon an inclusivist premise, namely that equality consisted in the opportunity of all to avail themselves of common facilities for their development, hence the emphasis upon "common schools", core courses - in short upon the organisational, not to mention managerial, aspects of schooling. And from this it follows also that a profound transformation has taken place in the role of education in society. It has become an instrument for realising a particular pattern of society in the future, by attempting to create new values in the present. Yet, by no means is it coincidental that the reorientation in values of the educational world was also accompanied by the application of new disciplines to the area of educational policy - sociology and social administration, to mention but the most obvious.

Role of sociology in defining the redemptive interpretation

Under the predestinative interpretation, the task of education systems was to seek out those inner qualities of mind, held to be common to "able individuals". In this it was buttressed by the theories of psychology and the techniques of psychometrics. Ability was, according to these devices, independent of social class or milieu. Indeed, the role of the school once the able had been identified was largely to maintain such independence from environmental pressures for the elite. Running throughout was the idea of the autonomous individual, not the individual in society, a model closely akin to that attitude towards political life that Fragnière identifies with "rejection of the world" (1).

(1) Gabriel Fragnière, Le Royaume de l'Homme: essai sur la religion et la démocratie, Geneva, 1973, Editions du Mont Blanc, p. 45.

In contrast to this psychological-escetic vision of the individual in society, the redemptive interpretation rested upon sociological premises. If psychology in its interests concentrates on the "inner worldliness" of the human being, sociology resides at the opposite pole of human activity, focussing upon the continuous interaction between the individual and the social groups often widely disparate in values, motivations, attitudes and cultures, with which he mixes in his various social contexts. This had profound effects upon the concept of the autonomous individual. This is not to say that the concept itself was any the less central in the redemptive interpretation of educational opportunity than it was in the predestinative. Rather it rested upon a different vision, that of the individual in the world and part of it, as opposed to that of the individual in the world but not of it. Against the bipolar interpretation of human abilities - the academic theoretical vs the rest - the redemptive interpretation contents itself less with the quest for "inner Godliness" than with the attempt to analyse social reality in a pluralistic, multi-level, multi-causal frame. It did not content itself merely with the acquisition of evidence to prove or to disprove a single hypothesis - namely that ability was or was not determined largely by heredity or genetic factors. Rather it was concerned with the mediating social structures and social conditions that accompanied this supposedly neutral criterion. The influence of sociology upon both the development and the ideology of education as an instrument of development was outstanding. So too was the influence of economics. For both are what might be termed "worldly studies", accepting the "environment" and seeking to change it, to manipulate it in such a way that it might prove an advantage to the individual, rather than leaving it aside. In so doing, the advent of these two disciplines rearranged the relationship of education to political life, bringing back what one sociologist of religion has termed "l'idée de Chrétienté" that is, it assumed the techniques of political power to further the end of egalitarianism and as a means of diffusing this ideal into society (1). It is this characteristic - an attitude that formed one of the most powerful instruments in religious development - that accounts for the increasing politicisation of educational issues throughout the 1960's. Educational development became then a centre piece in political debate rather than being a somewhat distant adjunct.

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(1) Fragnière, op. cit., p. 45.

The influence of sociology emerged in other ways too. It reversed the relationship between educational structures, the pupil and the curriculum, with the result that the redemptive interpretation of educational opportunity casts the pupil as the constant and assigns as variables both school structures and the curriculum. It was a significant transformation. It brought into question the legitimacy of the self fulfilling prophecy that lay at the heart of the predestinative interpretation. The internal barriers of selection did not, in effect, sort out the able from the less able on purely intellectual grounds. They did, however, favour children from well-off homes. The concept of learning itself changed, relying less on the inner light of motivation, than on the theory of incentives. The techniques of teacher education themselves underwent subtle change. Far from being regarded as techniques learnt irrespective of space and time, they became increasingly imbued with the belief that the purpose of teaching was to manipulate the pupil's environment, creating, hopefully, those conditions by which ability could be boosted and account taken of those sociological factors that hindered the emergence of early or precocious intelligence.

The dimensions of social policy in the redemptive interpretation

Certainly the "worldliness" of the redemptive interpretation led it to regard the school as an instrument for social transformation. The school, it felt, could eliminate both geographical and social disparities in access to extended secondary education (1). Nevertheless, it still shared features in common with the predestinative concept of educational opportunity. Agreed, it did not share the notion of the school as an autonomous institution. The school, just like the individuals in it, was merely part of the whole social system. Equality, achievement, success and failure were outcome affected by the social ecology of which it was part. What both interpretations did endorse was its primary role as a value determining agency. The difference however, lay in the passive role assigned in this area by the predestinative concept in contrast to the active role placed upon it by the redemptive concept. Given the right

(1) For this in the English context, see Julienne Ford, Social Class and the Comprehensive school, London, 1969, Routledge & Kegan Paul and for the German see Jurgen Raschert, Gesamthochschule : ein gesellschaftliches Experiment, Stuttgart, 1974, Klett Verlag.

educational strategies, the school, so the redemptive interpretation argued, could generate social justice for all, and not merely for the elect. It could bring about a change in attitudes and values. What this meant was simple; namely that the school could acquire the mission of being an active instrument of social policy. Indeed, in the euphoria that accompanied the erosion of the predestinative ethic, the school was invested with seemingly omnipotent powers in areas far outside its ken. For instance, it was seen as an agency for solving problems of social welfare and of urban renewal (1).

The abolition of the concept of autonomy as a feature of education systems and its replacement by a concept based on social ecology supposed a different relationship with the state. At a simplistic level, it presupposed an interventionist model, thereby assigning to the scrap heap the historical maintenance relationship that underpinned the predestinative interpretation. By becoming a vehicle for social policy, the school assumed a dual function in keeping with the growing preoccupations of the day. These as we have suggested earlier, were manpower planning on the one hand, urged on by the rise of economists of education, and egalitarianism on the other, a priority imposed by the growing influence of sociologists upon government decision making (2). The particular significance of such a change was two fold: first, it rested upon a "corrective" and dynamic mechanism in which the school became the nodal point for both economic and social development; second it eschewed the pessimistic premise of human nature, replacing it by an optimistic one. With hindsight it is extraordinary how rapidly this change came about.

No less remarkable was the heady optimism and confidence in the power of institutions to effect reform - a reaction perhaps, to the predestinative ethic which saw them functioning sub speciae aeternitatis. There was, not unnaturally, adequate justification to be found in the quantitative and qualitative trends in educational development during these years. In 1965 between 12 and 16 per cent of the relevant age-group entered higher education in the member states of the EEC. Five years later, it had risen to between 20 and 23 per cent.

(1) Guy Neave "Urban education in Europe", Secondary Education, summer 1975; Burton Clark (ed), The Problems of American Education, London, 1975, Croom Helm; W. Freeman Butts and Roy Niblett (eds) Education in cities: World Year Book of Education 1968/9, London and New York, 1969, Evans.

(2) Maurice Kogan, The Politics of Education, op. cit.

Proportion of age group entering Higher Education, by Year

COUNTRY	Age group	University level					Total in Higher Education				
		65	70	72	73	74	65	70	72	73	74
GERMANY	20-22	8.3%	11.2%	14.3%			11.6%	15.3%	19.5%		
German nationals		7.7%	10.7%	12.6%	15.0%		10.8%	14.6%	18.2%	20.4%	
BELGIUM	18-2[illegible]	9.6%	13.0%	12.5%	12.3%	12.3%	21.8%				
DENMARK	19-21	8.7%	11.5%	11.0%	11.1%	11.1%					
FRANCE	18-20	11.6%	13.8%	18.2%	18.6%	18.8%	14.8%	19.2%	24.6%	25.[illegible]%	
ITALY	19-21						14.8%	27.9%			29.2%
NETHERLANDS	17-20	5.4%	8.3%			8.0%	12.8%	18.3%			
SWEDEN	19-20	1[illegible].0%	23.[illegible]%	20.0%			15.3%	26.2%	22.8%		
UNITED KINGDOM	18-19	6.[illegible]%	10.6%	11.2%	11.5%		12.4%	20.3%	21.3%	21.4%	
Home students in universities			7.8%	7.9%	8.2%	8.2%					
UNITED STATES	18	27.8%	31.2%	27.1%	26.7%		38.5%	49.4%	44.3%	43.6%	
JAPAN	18-19	13.3%	17.1%	21.4%			17.6%	23.6%	29.4%		

22.

The guiding light of the redemptive interpretation of educational opportunity was, then, institutional reform - a reform primarily from beneath, organised through the education system, stimulated by governments anxious for a better educated labour force and for economic prosperity, willing to lessen the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged, a reform nurtured by industry in search of greater competitiveness and fostered by the growing aspirations of both parents and children. The fact that education was regarded as the prime generator of such benefits, benefits accepted as such irrespective of countries, the political parties in power, or the stage of economic development attained in individual states, conferred upon the "redemptive interpretation" a status similar to that of a "Church universal" , not just in its territorial extent, but also because, increasingly, the fate of the individual depended on his subscribing to this belief. This was not without challenge.

The Dissenters

The predestinative and the redemptive interpretations of equality of opportunity represent at the present moment what one might call the two major orthodoxies in the educational world. Their expression is enshrined in the structures of education systems and manifested by such features as the degree of early selection, the differentiation at the secondary level between different types of school to cater for what are thought to be different species of aptitudes. Within individual establishments, the presence or absence of streamed classes, common core curricula or heterogeneous learning groups, are all the exterior trappings of an ethic which, for the most part, is held by those involved in its administration. As with the organised Church, so also the organised education system. "The form which the government of the church assumes in any given age is not an accident, but must be regarded as an outward expression of a spirit working from within - the establishment of an intelligible purpose" (1).

Yet the presence of rival orthodoxies does not imply absence of dissent amongst the followers of any one of them. Rather the contrary. The existence of rival orthodoxies is apt to encourage the rise of dissenting groups, especially when

(1) A.G.V. Allen, Christian Institutions, Part 1, p. 5.

the advent of the second orthodoxy - the "redemptive" interpretation - is itself relatively recent. For its recency merely shows how rapidly yesterday's dissent may successfully become tomorrow's accepted belief.

Dissension does not, of necessity, entail automatic secession from the Church. Indeed, in their early stages, most dissenting movements sought desperately to reform the parent body from within. One thinks of the early Lutheran movement in the 16th century and the early Puritans in the Anglican Church of the early 17th. Nor, in the two cases cited, did the reform they envisaged involve challenging the fundamental beliefs, doctrine or cult. Their major challenge revolved about administrative and organisational aspects, calling for an alteration in the government of the established Church, for a transformation in its scope. In fine, dissent sets out less with the intention of undermining the fundamental credos so much as to reinvigorate its governance or to remedy its failure to reach out to those who, in the opinion of the dissenters, stand most in need of its ministrations.

This "loyalty" does not exclude the possibility of secession later particularly if reform from within should prove or appear impossible. As Joachim Wach noted in his study of religious organisations "...a protest against the traditional forms of religious worship does not necessarily exclude plans for the establishment of a new religious community or for initiating a reorganisation and reorientation within a traditional one ... the aim is to establish within or without the central body an example of true communion." (1).

The redemptive interpretation, as we have seen places heavy reliance on institutional measures for realising equality of opportunity. The school is regarded as the prime instrument in this. Such confidence is not necessarily shared by all. Indeed, there is a strong and growing current of opinion that regards the school as a creator of inequality, rather than as the instrument for attaining equality. Here, however, we must distinguish between two distinct schools of thought, only one of which represents "dissent within the Church". The other, associated mainly with the Deschooling movement gathered around Ivan Illich, should be seen as representative of a sectarian development. We will therefore reserve dealing with this latter until later. Both groups share a common

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(1) Joachim Wach, op. cit., pp. 165-166.

incredulity about the capacity of the school to redistribute in a positive manner, the life chances in society. The dissenters - and they are associated mainly with the concept of recurrent or pemanent education - argue, however, that the state, by alternative and indirect strategies of social policy, can effect a measure of equality. The sectarians, by contrast, deny this possibility either to the school or to the state. The first accepts the proposition that institutional reform through extending presently existing practices is likely to prove successful. The second believes that the institution itself is insufficient and that nothing less than "root and branch" recasting of both institutions and their accompanying ethic will have the slightest consequence.

Nevertheless, whether dissenters or sectarians, both groups share a common doctrine about the nature of intelligence and the potential of the individual. This states:

1. that intelligence is influenced by both public and private environments; that is, whilst the individual's performance and aspirations and self-perception are influenced by his primary groups, their perceptions are in turn affected by their relationship to the means of production, effectively those agencies determining occupational status, income, standing, prestige and life style.

2. that intelligence is a culturally and anthropologically defined phenomenon ; cannot therefore be measured in any way that is meaningful or alternatively, that is neither a constant nor a nominally valid criterion or indicator.

3. that the individual's potential depends on the creation of a suitable environment in education so that education may the better respond to his needs as they develop.

Because they challenge the institutional practices rather than the fundamental beliefs of the "redemptive" interpretation of educational opportunity, the dissenters can, in some respects, be seen as extending many of the principles inherent in the "parent belief" beyond their previously accepted scope. The basic principle behind both permanent and recurrent education involves the accessibility of knowledge. Whilst the mainstream "redemptive view still associates accessibility with the school and thus with a particular age span, tightly circumscribed in an individual's lifetime, the dissenters take a more radical stance. The dissenters argue that such a unitemporal interpretation is not of itself sufficient to meet the changing needs of the individual. Still less is it adequate to meet the more

fundamental and rapid transformations in society generally. Thus, performance and attainment in the course of secondary education are irrelevant to the demands individuals are likely to face later in life. Axiomatic to the dissenters who back permanent or recurrent education is the conviction that the more mediocre the individual's performance in school, the greater the necessity for access to additional knowledge later. By challenging the institutional capacity of the school to effect equality of opportunity , the dissenter are not, however, questioning the institutional forms through which knowledge is dispensed. Rather, their commitment is to extending the facilities that previously were reserved for a particular age group throughout all age groups. They are, then, challenging the narrow organisational base and the limited scope that the redemptive interpretation of educational opportunity espoused.

This is not to deny, however, the important sociological consequences which flow from such a view. Perhaps the most significant is the denial that eventual occupational status and social mobility are determined both in and by the school. Both the predestinative, and the main stream redemptive concepts of educational opportunity rested upon this fact. Whether the actual occupation concerned was defined sooner or later in the individual's school career is, naturally, significant in itself. For, as we have seen, it acted as one of the crucial distinctions between the predestinative and redemptive concepts.

The paradox in the dissenters' stance is that whilst doubting the efficacy of the school as an instrument for social change, they support the notion that life-long education - that is the school extended from 6 to 65 - is a realistic solution. In extending the outer bounds of the redemptive interpretation, the dissenters take their stand on the belief that the criterion governing the individual's right to education, be it in secondary school or post secondary institute, is his own perceived need, irrespective of time or place. Obviously, there are limits to this. Be they ever so efficient, education networks cannot carry this principle right up to the death bed - though one suspects that the radio and television programmes of the Open University might provide even the moribund with edifying information during their last moments upon this earth!

The pessimism expressed by the supporters of permanent education with regard to the ability of the school to effect social change impelled them to go beyond it, to expand its organisation. Equally, the same reasoning impelled them to bring in other agencies as part of a widely coordinated plan to achieve equality.

They denied therefore a feature that was common both to the predestinative and to the redemptive interpretations of educational opportunity, namely the primacy of the school as a value determining agency. Rather it is conceived as a "mediatory institution.".

The concept of a "mediatory institution"

As we have described it, the redemptive interpretation depended on the concept of social ecology in which the school penetrated into the community and acted as a catalyst for social reform as well as supporting the changing manpower needs of the economy. Since they deny the power of the school to effect social change on its own and within its limited confines, the dissenters look to other areas of the social system which, coordinated with education, may bring about greater opportunity for disadvantaged groups in society. Research in recent times would appear to justify this approach (1). Wether structural reform in secondary school, curriculum innovation and compensatory strategies in the classroom for the backward, even new methods of teacher training, none of these "sectoral" solutions can break the cycles of poverty or deprivation that lie at the root of these exterior problems. Rather, the issue lies deeply enrooted in other areas of the social system which the school cannot easily, if at all, influence. But because such phenomena are the responsibility of other areas of the administrative machine, policies implemented to combat them are not necessarily complementary to policies conducted within the education system, let alone the individual school (2). Effectively, the action of the school is mediated through the initiatives taken in other domains of the social system.

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(1) A.H. Halsey, Educational Priority Areas, Oxford, 1974, OUP; Children and their Primary Schools (known as the Plowden Report), London 1967, HMSO; Christopher Jenks et al., Equality, New York, 1971, Basic Books; more recently Raymond Boudon, "Mieux comprendre la relation education-égalité en France", Equality: conference of OECD, vol. 1, 1976, Paris, pp. 283-299.

(2) For a critique of previous English policies see A.H. Halsey "Education and social mobility in Britain since World War Two", in Equality, op. cit. p. 502.

The dimensions of social policy amongst the Dissenters

The relegation of the school to the position of a mediatory institution has immediate repercussions both upon its function as an instrument of social policy and upon the role played by the state. Equally important, it has also considerable implication for the type of "intellectual discipline" governing the development of educational policy. The dissenters - they might even be termed "state redemptionists" - see two clear strategies outside the education system, but coordinated with the type of organisational change we have outlined above.

The first of these is community action. Though similar in the involvment in the community stressed by the redemptive interpretation, such community action programmes do not take the school as a point of departure, though naturally, it may be included. The objective is to break into the deprivation cycle outside the school, thereby creating the conditions by which the structural innovations inside, now regarded as of second level importance, may attain their ends.

A second strategy and one currently being discussed amongst the economists of education and social administrators involves manipulating one of the most powerful administrative tools, governing human behaviour : namely the tax structure. Several proposals have been advanced in this direction - the notion of a "negative" income tax by which the state provides a cash benefit for those beneath a stipulated income level, or changes in the threshold at which taxable income begins (1). Such an approach is in effect, indirect. It will only achieve a measure of equality in the education system to the extent that it results in a certain measure of inequality in areas outside it.

It may be argued, however, that this approach involves not so much dissent from the redemptionist interpretation as its take over by the technocrats. There is some element of truth here. For, pushed to its extreme, this second sclution takes the onus of moving towards social justice out of the education system altogether, whereas, those dissenters supporting programmes for permanent and recurrent education, still cleave to the notion of joint and coordinated action between state and education system, defined in its broadest sense.

As soon as the initiative for achieving equality passes from the education system, or alternatively, depends on coordination between education and other departments

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(1) Equality : conference of OECD, op. cit.

of national administration, the main interest centres on the mechanism of government administration, their criteria of allocating resources and the ways in which the functioning of the administrative engine may be improved in the light of particular objectives. This development is itself reflected in the area of education studies, which turns increasingly towards the fields of social administration, government and management.

The Sects : equality of educational opportunity and the Deschoolers

The main challenge of the Dissenters to the "redemptive" interpretation of educational opportunity turned about its organisational insufficiency. A similar challenge has been made by groups identified with the notion of Deschooling society or, in England, the United States and Denmark, the Freeschoolers (1). Whereas the first was content to work within the educational and ideological parameters of the "redemptive interpretation", the latter was not. Studies into secessionary protest in religious movements suggest that the main break away from the parent body takes "the form of objection not to the form of expression (doctrine, cult or organisation) but to the general attitude and policy of the religious community, to particular social and political institutions which are regarded as manifesting a spirit imcompatible with, even hostile to, the professed religious ideals. The radical "perfectionist" objects to compromises with religious and ethical standards on the part of the ecclesiastical bodies" (2). Symbolic of this objection is the careful distinction made by the sectarians between "education" on the one hand and "schooling" on the other, a distinction previously non-existent in English. Education, as is well known, to subtle observers of Anglo-Saxon society, covered both "education" and "enseignement" in a magnificent panoply of imprecision.

For the Free or Deschoolers objected not merely to the compromises that official orthodoxy of educational opportunity was prepared to make and which was contained in the work "Schooling". They also regarded the organisation and structure of education as expressing an ethic and a concept of education that were profoundly anti-educational. Thus conflict over organisational forms sprang from an equally deep-seated disagreement over the purposes of education and its links with the capitalist state. In short, like the Root and Branch sects of the Reformation and

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(1). W. Kenneth Richmond, Free Schools, London, Methuen & Co., 1973.
. Guy Neave, "Free schools : education at the crossroads", in D. Holly (ed.), Education or Domination, London, Arrow books, 1974.

(2) Wach, op. cit., p. 186.

the 17th century - the Anabaptists or the Quakers for example - the Freeschoolers and Deschoolers did not question the right of the individual to salvation - or, in this case, to education. Rather they questioned both the institution and its ethic which together, pointed him on the paths to righteousness.

The major source of conflict lay precisely in that area which the "redemptive interpretation" regarded as its strength, namely its ability to meet the changing economic and manpower needs of the community by providing education and training to more children and more closely in keeping with the perceived requirements of the economy. The sectarian denounced this on two grounds ; first, because such involvment with the economic needs of society meant accepting the validity of the social order ; second because it entailed giving greater priority to the demands of the state than to the needs of the individual. Their doubts over both the organisation and the institution that arose from the "redemptive interpretation" of educational opportunity were all the greater for the fact that the emphasis on institutional solutions served but to maintain vested interests. To the Anabaptists, who rejected both sacramentalism and sacerdotalism, similar arguments held way (1); the Church symbolised not simply involvment with the world but also maintenance of its leaders (2). Both the 16th century Anabaptist sects and the present day Free or Deschoolers endorse a particular argument to describe the conservative nature of established orthodoxies and their institutions, be they educational or ecclesiastic. The ruling groups control the Church/secular state. The Church/secular state controls salvation/education. Therefore salvation/education is an expression of the interests of ruling groups in society.

Not only is this reasoning central in determining the relationship between the sects and the state, it is also central to their explanation of the way schools may be said to perpetuate both social and therefore, educational inequalities. The school, they argue, is an emanation of the state and the state itself a reflection of legitimised social disparities. In thus continuing inequality, the school is a faithful and effective device of class interest. Indeed, so long as the education system is seen as an instrument of "certification" - that is, assigning individuals into graded categories in anticipation of a similar grading

(1) Wach, op. cit. p. 191.

(2) Troeltsch, op. cit., vol. II, p. 697.

in the division of labour - so those disparities will continue to exist. The education system is then, a historical instrument of social policy intended to reproduce the disparities between classes in access to knowledge, in command of resources and ultimately, in status and political power (1).

The Deschoolers and Freeschoolers deny the possibility of the state-government and administered education system achieving any equalisation of educational opportunity, because the state itself is an instrument of class domination. The solution is therefore to separate the two and to create schools governed by parents and pupils, independent, self-administering and self-determining as regards curriculum, structure and what constitute the criteria of success. Such a vision is entertained mainly by the Freeschoolers in England and Denmark, where the possibilities of private education are greater perhaps than elsewhere. In the case of the former country, there are adequate precedents inspired mainly by the middle class anarchist theories of A.S. Neill and the experiance of Summerhill. The Freeschoolers represent, in many respects, the quietest wing of the sectarian movements. Their doctrine draws nourishment from the Libertarian school and they are thus content in the main simply with the possibility of creating their own establishments, rather than embarking on a campaign of conquest and reform. They do not seek to escape from involvment in worldly status, but attempt, rather, to minimize its meaning. To revert to the Weberian typology of the religious personality, they correspond to the "inner worldly mystic" (2).

The solution of the Deschoolers differs in several respects. Rather than seeking to set up enclaves of the "saved" its object is more radical, and involves a highly developed eschatology. Deschooling society demands not merely breaking the link between state and the process of education, but also the monopoly of the teaching profession over education. By identifying the resources of society as a whole with the purposes of education, the Deschoolers seek to remove the institutional monopoly of the education system over education, teaching and training - the educational equivalent of denying "institutional grace". And by denying the monopoly over teaching to the teaching profession, they make each man his own teacher - or, in religious terms, they deny the power of the priesthood

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(1) Jacques Hallak, L'Ecole Capitaliste en France, Paris, 1973, Maspero; Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, Les Héritiers, Paris, 1964; Jules Henry, The Libertarian School, Harmondsworth, 1970, Penguin Education Special. Ivan Illich, The Celebration of Awareness, Harmondsworth, 1971 ; Penguin , also Deschooling Society, Harmondsworth, 1970, Penguin Education Special; Everett Reimer, School is Dead, Harmondsworth, 1971, Penguin Education Special.

and the sacerdocy.

In this respect, they bear certain similarities with the "predestinative interpretation" of educational opportunity. For implicit in this ideology is the notion of the autonomous individual and the autonomous source of education, in which the state ought not to interfere. The individual is, once again, an inner directed, self motivated being. There are, however, several significant differences that distinguish the Deschoolers from the "predestinative interpretation". First of all, they do not limit access to education and knowledge simply to the elect. The process of acquiring knowledge is , rather, an organic part of human existence. Secondly, they do not distinguish between various sorts of knowledge - academic, technical or vocational. This follows logically from their denial of the values implicit in social hierarchies and thus a denial of the distinctions in the hierarchy of knowledge from which the former draw their legitimation. Thirdly, theirs is far from being a pessimistic thesis as to man's educability. It is, if anything, optimistic.

Much of the educational theory of the Deschoolers derives from the experience of third world countries and is heavily influenced by anthropological investigations of so called primitive people (1). And much of their analysis springs from the impact of Western style organisations and bureaucracies upon indigenous village communities. The utopia of educational networks, described by Illich in Deschooling Society, represents a projection into a de-bureaucratised society of the integral organic links between education and the daily activities of these communities at an early stage in development. It is, then, an attempt to return to the past, when the community transmitted its ethos as part of its routine existence, and before the priesthood of teachers and governments laid claim to a role which, in "natural" society, befell its every member.

This retour en arrière and subsequent projection of a future utopia is a characteristic common to many sectarian movements in their search to recapture the early spirit of the Church (2). But in what way is the comparison of the Deschoolers with the Anabaptist sects of the 16th century a legitimate one?

(1) See for instance Paolo Freire, Education for Liberation, Harmondsworth, 1972 Penguin Education Special.

(2) Wach, op. cit., p. 139.

In the first place, the Deschooling movement draws a rigid separation between the state and the education system. In the second place it rejects the all-inclusive compulsory nature of schooling. Instead, the task of education - which is separated from what is regarded as a process of indoctrination through schooling - is undertaken by a voluntary contract between individuals. The parallels with the Anabaptists are striking. The ideal of this sect was the setting up of religious communities of the "truly converted" on a voluntary basis. Symbolic of this voluntarism was adult baptism in distinction to child baptism which was held to symbolise the compulsory and non ethical basis of Church membership (1). The Anabaptist lived as far as possible detached from the state, forswearing all official positions, "law, force and the oath" (2). They preached a doctrine of separation between Christianity and political institutions, the better to preserve the purity of the former (3).

The essential similarity between Deschoolers on the one hand and, at four centuries remove, the Anabaptists on the other, lies in what might be termed the politics of disillusionment - a disillusionment with the Reformation in the case of the latter and with the lack of appreciable progress in the domain of equality of educational opportunity on the part of the former. In consequence, both rejected the institutions they held to be responsible , the secular state and its instrument, the school by the Deschoolers, and the established churches, be they Catholic, Reformed or Calvinist by the Anabaptists.

Ideology, Education and Development

In this essay, we have attempted to examine the various interpretations and views of equality of opportunity in education by means of an historical analogue. Two major interpretations - the predestinative and the redemptive - were discussed, together with an analysis of some of the significant features involved in various forms of dissent from them. It is not surprising that the tools honed by the sociologists of religion serve to sharpen our appreciation of developments in

(1) Troeltsch, op. cit. p. 695.

(2) Ibid., p. 696.

(3) Fragnière, op. cit., p. 83.

education. In times past, and indeed, until very recently, the major institution for the inculcating of moral values was the Church. The rise of the nation state and the formal seperation of religion from politics transferred this role to the organised and state administered education system. If the context is different, the fundamental issues are not. Changes in education policy can, of course, be justified by appealing to all modes of reasoning - "national efficiency", the ples of the manpower planner, humanitarian, utilitarian, not to mention various notions of justice. Whatever the mode of discourse, it involves fundamental conflict over the nature of man, over the nature of man's estate, his suitability for achieving or avoiding it. If anything, the conflicts are even more severe today. For the secularisation of society means that man is now aware that the world created is created by man (1). Justification for the diverse views on human perfectibility can, therefore, no longer appeal to a supreme arbiter any more than they can seek temporary refuge by appealing to rhunic statistics. Conflicts over the different degrees to which the individual is educable, over the attendant changes in the structure of education systems and the organisation of the individual school, over the extent to which the state should intervene to encourage, alternatively, to suppress them represent fundamental discontinuities in the development of education.

Both Church and education systems support explicitly the notion of moral orthodoxy or, to use a sociological term for the same phenomenon, normative behaviour. Recently, the suggestion has been made that the power of both education system and school are diminishing in this respect and that other sources, particularly youth culture and the mass media, now exercise what is perhaps a dominant influence. Non-normative behaviour is condemned as such by certain quarters of the teaching profession with the same vigour that heterodoxy received from the Church. Yet, heterodoxy is now a basic feature of all education systems: leaving aside the personal beliefs of those employed in them.

Let us take the example of certain countries in Western Europe. From a strictly statistical point of view, secondary education is universal and compulsory up to a certain age. And even past it, the trend is towards a spiralling staying-

(1) Fragnière, op. cit., p. 180.

on rate amongst the 16 to 18 year olds. However dramatic these trends in terms of sheer numbers, they tell us little, if anything, about the stage of development in each country. What is the dominant interpretation of educational equality ? Is it in process of transformation ? How many states have moved from the predestinative interpretation to the redemptive? If we turn our attention to the United Kingdom, for example, we find that the state of development in secondary schools is one of transition from the predestinative to the redemptive. Grammar schools founded upon the former concept stand cheek-by-jowl with various forms of comprehensive school representing in varying degrees the transition to the redemptive notion of educational opportunity. A similar situation exists in Germany and, for instance, in Holland though by no means so advanced as in Sweden where the redemptive interpretation is not merely the predominant orthodoxy, but is also being applied to higher education as well. Indeed, some of the Swedish legislation, particularly the parliamentary act known as 25/4, by opening higher education up to those aged 25+ who have worked full time for more than four years, seems to indicate that the Dissenters'interpretation of educational opportunity is now assuming the status of official doctrine.

Nor does the fact that a country endorses a redemptive interpretation with regard to the secondary school, of necessity demand that it extend the same principle or concept of educational opportunity to higher or to post secondary education. In fine, the classification of countries according to the predominant ideology in both secondary and post-secondary education is a necessary adjunct to the otherwise limited information purveyed by the notion of the inevitable progression from elite to mass to universal secondary or higher education. The first, as we have suggested, makes explicit the discontinuities. The second appears to espouse what historians term the Whig interpretation of history - that of inevitable and steady development. Or, to change cultural contexts for a moment, an almost Panglossian confidence in the world educational. This is far from justified. As we have seen, the transition from one ethic to another is accompanied by all manner of debate, disagreement and controversy, both in the political sphere and in the more restricted area of education itself.

The changes we have discussed in this essay represent a historical event of the first magnitude. For although many of our secondary education systems have become, statistically speaking, universal, their ethic has remained

one of undiluted elitism almost since the time compulsory, secular and free education was introduced in Europe in the course of the last century. The watershed - the point in time when the predestinative-elitist ethic began to wane in European education policies - can be placed some time in the course of the decade 1960-1970. Instead, we now face a situation whereby "Instead of one, there grew up a plurality of conceptions of the normative Christian (educating) society..." (1). Although applied to the 16th century Reformation, Wach's description is exceedingly apt in view of our present condition. Sensitive writers on education are well aware of this phenomenon and have associated it with the notion of a break with the past. Edmund King, writing on developments in European post compulsory education, noted:

"All highly urbanised countries and regions are experiencing the tension between the deep cultural traditions and habits which have invested the citizens' minds like language or religion, and those contradictory challenges which arise from an altered life-style developing in a plurality of new possibilities" (2).

In short, we stand at a point in time when education systems cease to be the purveyors of a particular orthodoxy. Moreover, this interpretation of educational development would seem doubly justified in view of some of the administrative decisions being talked about in certain government circles. In both France and Sweden, thinking is now turning towards decentralisation of administrative control, either in the form of greater teacher influence in individual establishments or in the form of proposals for regionalisation and other measures of administrative devolution. Such measures seem to point to even greater variation within education systems between both philosophies or interpretations of equality. They also point to the possibility of conflicting philosophies within the framework of a single establishment. This too is a significant departure - or discontinuity from previous practice. For previously, the role of the state was one of ensuring a just functioning of education within a uniform set of legislative and hence philosophical parameters.

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(1) Wach, op. cit., p. 274.

(2) Edmund J. King, Christine H. Moor and Jennifer A. Mundy, Post compulsory Education: a new analysis in Western Europe, Beverley Hills, 1974, Sage, p. 383.

In short, education would appear to be passing from that principle which underlined the historical role of the state as an enforcer of orthodoxy, both in religion and in education: cujus regio, ejus religio, the compromise which ultimately put an end to the sectarian strife of the Reformation, and which the nation state inherited.

It may be argued that by using an historical analogue and by taking over the framework of the sociology of religion into the field of educational policies, we have simply presented certain philosophical and sociological precepts that have long existed in educational controversy. We have, in short, simply presented matters of routine and common knowledge in a different light. All this is true. Yet, all too often the process of educational change is cast in a lurid and dramatic glow of innovation, for the simple reason that those examining its course are interested more in the techniques of manipulation and change than in the origins of the problems with which they are enmeshed. This is all the more disturbing given the advent in the field of educational policy of such ahistorical and manipulative arts as management and administrative sciences. Concerned with aligning the present on a technocratic vision of the future, they fail to realise that the situation they are attempting to unravel or the problem they are trying to resolve is, itself, the product of past beliefs, attitudes and convictions. This is true for most spheres of human activity. It is especially true in education, itself the vessel of past and present values.

The assimilation of educational development with religion as a means of understanding the dynamics of social change opens up a fruitful area, not just for future research for the field is scarce touched upon in this perspective. It also opens it up to the better understanding of those who seek to comprehend how educational policies may become equitable in the future.

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